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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS, GEORGIA

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused August 20 news coverage on the continuing investigation into former President Chen Shui-bian and his family members' alleged money laundering, and on Chinese Taipei's defeat by the United States at the Beijing Olympic baseball competition.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" criticized President Ma Ying-jeou's first overseas visit, which was conducted in a low-profile manner, for fawning on China and compromising Taiwan's interests in terms of foreign relations. A column in the conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" said that U.S. President George W. Bush's decision to attend the Olympic Games reflects his realization that it is important to establish a balance in the Taiwan Strait. With respect to the conflict between Georgia and Russia, a column in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" criticized Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili for self-incurring the disaster by misjudging the ambition of Russia and the unreliability of the United States. An op-ed piece written by a Western commentator in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" compared the recent events in Georgia with Taiwan's situation. The article alerted that "[J]ust like Moscow, Beijing has sought to break free of what it perceives as attempts by the US to encircle it within its region, and just as with Georgia, Beijing has come to see Taiwan not as a problem between China and Taipei, or between two sovereign states, but rather as part of a battle against US encroachment in its own sphere of influence." An editorial in the conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post," also commenting on the current situation in Georgia, said the U.S. missile pacts with Poland, not the split between Russia and United States over the problem of South Ossetia, "will have a greater impact on the growth in tensions in Russian-American relations. Remember Cuba." End summary.

### ¶3. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

A) "President Ma Hands Our International Space for Survival into China's Hands"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] editorialized (8/20):

"... 'No unification, no independence, and no use of force' is President Ma [Ying-jeou]'s so-called 'three noes policy.' This time, Ma added 'three new noes' when he had transit stops in the United States, which were 'no banquet for overseas compatriots, no welcoming at the airport, and no interviews.' Either the 'three noes policy' or the 'new three noes policy,' instead of talking about them to the America's ears, both [policies] were Ma's undisguised declarations to China that he does not have a second thought about achieving ultimate unification. In fact, Ma had declared his own stance a bit too much. The so-called 1992 consensus, diplomatic truce, and the Chinese Taipei have made touched China deeply. There is no need for Ma to give more to put China's mind at ease by having transit stops in the United States and visiting countries with which Taiwan has official ties [in a

low-profile manner]. Since President Ma does not have the intention to defend [Taiwan's] national sovereignty, Taiwan's undecided fate can only be defended by the people [in Taiwan] who are willing to fight for themselves at the key juncture."

#### B) "Cross-Strait Ties Need U.S. Balance"

Columnist Frank Ching opined in the conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] (8/20):

"U.S. President George W. Bush's decision to attend the Olympic Games despite domestic political pressure reflects his realization that it is important to establish a balance, so while the United States may chide Beijing from time to time on human rights, the overall approach is one of engagement. This policy has been largely successful and ought to be continued by whoever succeeds him in the White House. ... While competition, even antagonism, will occasionally characterize the relationship, cooperation should be the dominant theme. The U.S. and China will have to work together on such issues on nuclear proliferation, terrorism, the environment, climate change, and pandemic diseases. Otherwise, the world will not have much of a chance for a bright future."

#### 14. Georgia

##### A) "Don't Think About Relying on the Bush Administration"

Columnist Lin Po-wen commented in his column in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (8/20):

"After enjoying himself so much and almost forgetting to go home after the Beijing Olympics, and returning to his ranch in Texas hastily for vacation, [United States President George W.] Bush used a harsh tone to condemn Russia's invasion of Georgia. Bush said [in the Rose Garden on August 15] that 'bullying and intimidation are not acceptable ways to conduct foreign policy in the Twenty-First Century.' This sentence can also be used to condemn the United States' invasion of Iraq and intimidation of Iran.

"The Bush Administration is not only unqualified to stand on the moral pinnacle to criticize Russia but also lacks the diplomatic and military strength to persuade Kremlin [to withdraw from Georgia]. The Russian troops withdrew [from Georgia] under a truce agreement that French President Nicolas Sarkozy's mediated. Nevertheless, [Russia] deployed its surface-to-air short-range missiles in Georgia just before withdrawing its troops. Isn't what [Russia] does equivalent to taking the truce agreement as a piece of wastepaper? ...

"Don't be silly, Georgians, [you] would be better off making friends peacefully with the neighboring polar bears than with the distant United States. The United States is unreliable, especially the Bush Administration!"

##### B) "The Wider Implications of Georgia"

1J. Michael Cole, a Taipei-based writer, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (8/19):

"... The ramifications of the current situation in the Caucasus could be severe for Taiwan, as Moscow's increasingly close ally, Beijing, looks on and carefully analyzes the reaction from the international community. Just like Moscow, Beijing has sought to break free of what it perceives as attempts by the US to encircle it within its region, and just as with Georgia, Beijing has come to see Taiwan not as a problem between China and Taipei, or between two sovereign states, but rather as part of a battle against US encroachment in its own sphere of influence. Also worrying for Taiwan is that Russia has historically considered South Ossetia to be part of its territory and therefore a 'domestic' problem, just as Beijing has long argued that Taiwan is part of China.

"If Russia was able to launch its assault against Georgia under the pretext of defending ethnic Russians and Russian territory from a Georgia that is perceived as a pawn in the US empire, then there is nothing to prevent Beijing from reaching the same conclusion when it comes to Taiwan.

The next days and weeks will therefore be of the utmost importance as the international community formulates its response to the crisis in the Caucasus. While bearing their share of the blame for boxing Russia in, the US, NATO countries and the international community must state in no uncertain terms that violation of a sovereign state's integrity will not stand and that there would be severe consequences for Russia if it continued its aggression. ... The greatest security threat to Taiwan's future security would be for the West to issue a mild reprimand and not take Moscow to account for its war crimes, or fail to come to Georgia's assistance if war were to continue. This is not a lesson the world wants Beijing to learn."

C) "Cold War All Over Again?"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (8/19):

"... Russia opposes the expansion of NATO. In the 1990s, it was too weak to resist. But today, as the world's largest oil exporter, it is eager to show its new power and send an unmistakable message: Georgia, or the much larger Ukraine, will never be allowed to join NATO. But the United States and Poland announced on Thursday, Aug. 14, an agreement to deploy a battery of American missile interceptors in Poland, in the strongest reaction to Russia's military operation in Georgia. A day later, Ukraine announced its readiness to do the same after a long hesitation. Such actions 'cannot go unpunished,' Moscow has warned. The U.S. missile deals reflect a growing alarm about the intentions of a newly rich and powerful Russia. Negotiations for them dragged on for two years, but were completed only as old memories and new fears surfaced in recent days. The missile pacts, not the split between Russia and United States over the problem of S. Ossetia, will have a greater impact on the growth in tensions in Russian-American relations. Remember Cuba."

WANG